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ABSTRACT

This document is intended to assist new and experienced vocational education teachers in the United Kingdom who are delivering General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and vocational A-levels. The following are among the topics discussed in the guide's four sections: (1) developing an approach to vocational learning (establishing links with employers, contacting employers, developing partnerships, providing careers guidance); (2) vocational teaching and learning strategies (selecting delivery methods, planning site visits to businesses, incorporating the vocational context into schemes of work and lesson plans, developing a vocational resource base, directories and sources of further information); (3) teacher placements (flexible patterns of delivery for placements, placement sharing, benefits of teacher placements for students); and (4) developing effective student placement programs (post-16 work experience, work experience management; the role of small and medium-sized enterprises in providing placements, portfolios and part-time working, general employer benefits). Case studies providing examples of good practice and materials produced by schools and colleges are presented throughout the publication. The following items are appended: (1) an introduction to the Centre for

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Education and Industry, University of Warwick; (2) a work experience framework for tutors; (3) a sample student activity; and (4) a framework for excellence in work-related learning. (MN)

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GET REAL – WORK-RELATED TEACHING AND LEARNING

SHARON MOORE IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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SHARON MOORE IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY,
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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Note

The Learning and Skills Development Agency was formerly known as FEDA.

Vocational Learning Support Programme

Run by the Learning and Skills Development Agency:

- we aim to reach all post-16 schools and colleges and all levels of staff
- we offer support to teachers and managers to deliver high-quality GNVQs and vocational A-levels
- all our activities are backed by a programme of research and evaluation
- the Vocational Learning Support Programme is sponsored by the DfEE and all activities are subsidised.

Contents

Introduction	**1**
Developing an approach to vocational learning	**3**
Making the link	6
Contacting employers	7
Developing the partnership	8
Careers guidance	9
Vocational teaching and learning strategies	**11**
Delivery methods	13
Visits	15
Newquay Zoo skills-building activity	17
Incorporating the vocational context into schemes of work and lesson plans	18
Developing a vocational resource base	20
Directories and sources of further information	22
Teacher placements	**23**
Flexible patterns of delivery for placements	25
Placement sharing	27
Benefits of teacher placements for students	29
Other comments from teachers	29
Developing effective student placement programmes *Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick*	31
Post-16 work experience	33
Work experience management	34
The role of small and medium-sized enterprises in providing placements	35
Portfolios and part-time working	36
General employer benefits	38
Appendices	**39**
Introduction to the Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick	41
Work experience framework	43
Student activity	46
Framework for excellence in work-related learning	48

Preface

This publication has been produced by the DfEE-funded Vocational Learning Support Programme as part of its remit to support teachers delivering GNVQs and vocational A-levels.

Get real looks at ways to enhance the vocational element of these qualifications and provides advice on innovative delivery methods, setting up business links and teacher placements. It is a useful guide for teachers new to vocational education as well as experienced teachers. Staff development managers will find that many of the sections provide material suitable for use at staff training days.

Throughout the publication there are case studies, which provide examples of good practice, and materials produced by schools and colleges. These sections are highlighted in orange.

Thanks are due to the contributors. First, the Centre for Education and Industry at the University of Warwick, whose work in helping schools and colleges to develop effective education/business links is well known. Thanks also to the Agency's consultants who have contributed to this publication, especially Gerry Denston. Finally, my thanks to Michael Liggins, Development Adviser for the Vocational Learning Support Programme, for his contribution on teacher placement activities.

Sharon Moore, Development Adviser,
Vocational Learning Support Programme

Introduction

Development projects and case studies run by the Vocational Learning Support Programme suggest that linking the curriculum to the world beyond school and college increases student motivation and leads to improvements in achievement.

In a recent speech (*Education into employability – the role of the DfEE in the economy*, 24 January 2001), the Secretary of State for Education made reference to 35 work-related projects that took place in schools and colleges throughout the country to provide an alternative to some national curriculum subjects at key stage 4. The projects were a success. Participating students exceeded their expected levels of achievement and gained the same or better GCSE results than other students in their year group.

Vocational education clearly benefits students, but it also has advantages for employers who face looming skills shortages. Increasing the work-related element of teaching and learning means that students are more likely to be prepared and have the skills needed to succeed in the workplace – hence the introduction of key skills, vocational A-levels and the soon to be vocational GCSEs.

This publication suggests ways to enhance the vocational content of teaching in terms of delivery strategies and the use of teacher placements in industry. It will help teachers to:

- develop a whole-centre approach to vocational learning
- devise appropriate teaching and learning strategies for vocational programmes
- build up appropriate resources
- consider the value of teacher placement
- consider the value of work experience and part-time work for students.

Developing an approach to vocational learning

Improving the vocational content of the curriculum often requires a whole-centre approach to ensure maximum benefit for students. Consideration should be given to areas such as timetabling, staffing and resourcing. With timetabling, those responsible need to be aware that activities such as research, practicals, input from guest speakers and visits need blocks of time if they are to be completed successfully.

Having a three-hour block on a Thursday afternoon has enabled us to plan focused visits to local industry. We would not have been able to do this if the two one-and-a-half-hour sessions were spread across the week.

To develop links with the business community and local industry, teachers need to be aware of existing contacts and build upon these. The best links are those formed through personal contacts: governors, parents, former students or current students who may be working part time with a local company.

Many local and national organisations can also help schools and colleges to develop and improve the vocational aspect of the curriculum. Such organisations locally would include Education Business Consortium, Education Business Partnerships, Connexions, careers services and Chambers of Commerce. Nationally, organisations such as National Training Organisations, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Learning and Skills Development Agency can provide support and resources. More detailed information on these organisations can be found on page 20.

Some schools and colleges find it useful to appoint one person with responsibility for fostering links with local and national organisations and local employers – a vocational coordinator. A vocational coordinator is a named person for businesses and support organisations to contact. He or she is able to keep a record of all known contacts for use throughout the institution and to inform staff of all ongoing work with local employers in different curriculum areas. The vocational coordinator can also set up a resource bank of vocationally relevant material that all staff can access and contribute to.

A college's rationale for appointing a vocational coordinator

The need for a cross-college approach to maintain a database of employer contacts and possible work placements became apparent. There was a continuing problem in that businesses were being contacted repeatedly by representatives from different departments. This poor organisation and lack of internal communication was undermining our credibility with local employers and it was preventing us from developing future positive outcomes, either in terms of useful employer input or in offers for work placements. With central coordination and a professional approach we feel we are much better placed to ask local businesses to support the college.

Isle of Wight 'vocational champions'

Schools and colleges on the Isle of Wight have appointed vocational coordinators to help them plan and deliver vocational courses across the island. They received support from their local EBP through funding from the Vocational Learning Support Programme. The vocational coordinators have:

- enabled greater sharing of resources between the schools and colleges
- created a forum to allow busy practitioners to receive updates on a range of developments in vocational education
- participated in Agency development projects, which have allowed staff to be released to develop assignments and other resources for teaching and learning
- developed an all-island Curriculum 2000 offer, which is promoted through a website
- developed a coordinated approach to creating work experience programmes for both students and teachers.

Making the link

Links with businesses should benefit students, teachers and the businesses themselves. It is important to remember that businesses have to manage their day-to-day operations, so cannot always respond as quickly as you may want them to. In contacting businesses planning is crucial. Think about what you actually want out of your contact with industry, perhaps writing it down in the form of a brief. Target specific organisations and consider how an education/business link might benefit them, too.

Setting up and maintaining education/business links

- Make use of existing links.
- Identify key sources and organisations that can provide addresses and phone numbers.
- Avoid inundating the same business with too many requests.
- Be clear about exactly what you need from the business.
- Don't expect too much too soon – businesses have a business to run.
- Try to think of some mutual benefit that could be provided by the link.

Benefits for businesses

An employer who links up with a school or college can:

- supplement its training and development programmes
- enable employees to enhance their professional development
- develop relationships with students who may become future employees
- gain an insight into vocational qualifications
- participate in the development of the vocational curriculum by writing learning materials or devising assignments
- raise its profile.

Contacting employers

Having decided to contact a particular business to set up a link, teachers need to consider how to approach it. Writing a letter can be an opportunity for teachers to put across their reasons for wishing to set up a business link, but the letter may end up in the wrong hands and a response may never be received.

Direct telephone contact tends to be most effective in the first instance. Some larger firms do have education officers whose role will involve links with schools and colleges. Ask to speak to them or to be put through to the human resources manager or training manager. Depending on the information required it might be better to contact a particular manager, eg marketing manager or quality assurance manager.

Points to consider when contacting businesses

- Have a list of objectives and outcomes in mind, but be open-minded to other possibilities that arise.
- Be prepared to explain the nature of the vocational education, but avoid educational jargon.
- Find out what the person on the other end of the phone knows already before you launch into your sales speech.
- Be clear about exactly what you are asking the business for.
- Don't ask for too much too soon.
- Try to think of some mutual benefit and include this early on in the conversation.
- Take the opportunity to promote your work, your students and your plans – be enthusiastic about the project.
- Make clear plans about what will happen and when before you conclude your discussions.
- Arrange a preliminary meeting to discuss your needs.
- Don't give up if the business can't provide what you need. Still try to establish some useful contact.
- Always follow a telephone conversation with a letter confirming any discussions, outlining any arrangements and thanking the business for its support.
- Don't expect every call to be successful!

Developing the partnership

Education/business partnerships can be one of the most effective mechanisms to improve and develop the vocational content of teaching programmes. If such partnerships are to be effective, it is important that both parties know what they are bringing to the partnership.

Evidence shows that if partnerships are planned, there are many positive outcomes to be had. For example:

- education/business partnerships are able to make joint bids for external funding
- colleges can become involved in the development of company-based training schemes
- funding can be obtained for independent or distance-learning materials.

Working in partnership

With the help of the Vocational Learning Support Programme, Merton College and local schools have worked together to develop creative assessment methods for leisure, travel and recreation courses. They have developed a student activity based on a local tourist trail. Students are invited to add their own insight into the trail and to highlight attractions along it. This activity can be accessed at foundation and intermediate levels and vocational A-level. Led by the local Education Business Partnership, the project developed a framework for the sharing of resources and the pooling of vocational expertise, and links with teachers throughout the borough.

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Careers guidance

In developing a coherent strategy for vocational education, it is important that schools and colleges include careers guidance information. There is a need to take into account the wide variety of possible future employment opportunities within a vocational sector, and make students aware of these. There has been much good practice in schools and colleges in delivering careers support, and there are many instances of close links between careers services and schools and colleges.

Linking careers guidance directly with vocational studies brings courses alive and develops awareness of job roles. Input from employers on job roles and responsibilities is a valuable source of information here. Teachers on placement often have the opportunity to view job roles first hand – these can provide useful case studies for use in teaching.

A healthcare placement through the Training Organisation for Personal Social Services (TOPPS)

A teacher on placement at a local nursing home met the manager and deputy manager who talked through their own career paths and their current roles and responsibilities. Their career paths were very different from the teacher's own experience and provided valuable information to pass on to students. Having established contact with the home through the placement, the teacher was able to use it as a source of student placements and also involve the manager and deputy manager in a careers presentation for year 11 students.

Vocational teaching and learning strategies

Delivery methods

Teaching strategies to develop the vocational context require careful planning and often a revision of traditional teaching styles. They need to focus on active learning, where students are involved in activities such as investigating, discussing, planning and presenting.

Examples of such teaching strategies include:

- use of business-based materials
- use of case studies
- role play and discussion groups
- web-based activities
- analysis of industry data
- presentations from employers
- use of materials from trade magazines
- problem-solving activities
- focused visits to industry
- work experience placements
- work shadowing
- cross-curriculum activities, such as industry days or careers conventions.

Example of an industry day

Ten major companies agreed to take part in the event for all year 10 pupils. On the day, pupils became employees of one of these companies and were required to complete a relevant challenge. The companies set challenges, which included:

- designing a marketing plan for theatre productions aimed at young theatre goers
- planning and costing a makeover of the school's special support suite
- designing and creating a hoist capable of moving goods
- creating environmental logos and plaques to spearhead a recycling and energy conservation initiative.

Industry days enable students to experience the world of work in a challenging and motivating way. They develop teamwork skills as well as a greater awareness and understanding of the vocational area. Meanwhile, the companies have an opportunity to meet and work with students – their potential workforce of the future.

Example of a problem-solving activity

A local company was keen to find out how the local community viewed them. GNVQ students designed a questionnaire, which the company approved. In small teams using the questionnaire, the students carried out market research at local shopping centres, leisure centres and train stations. Each team wrote a report of their findings and gave a presentation to the management team of the company. The company was very pleased with the professional manner in which the students completed the task and the information they provided was extremely useful in future planning.

Through this activity, the students gained experience of compiling a questionnaire and conducting research. They realised that the information they were collecting was for a real purpose, rather than just an assignment exercise. The company valued the information that was collected and continued to work with the school on future projects.

Business games and role play

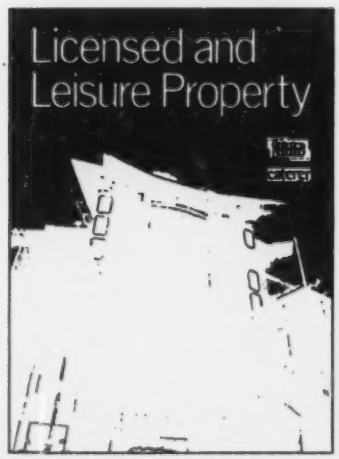
In one area, the local EBP funded an annual business game. Each year, teams of students from local schools and colleges competed to resolve complex sets of business-related problems in simulation format. This required:

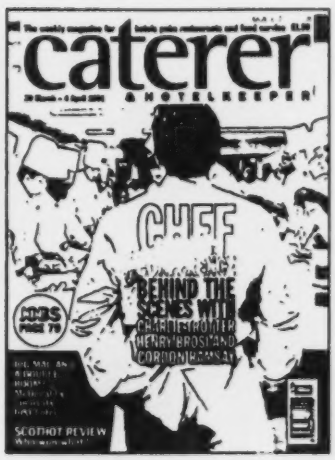
- role playing
- teamwork
- decision making
- problem solving.

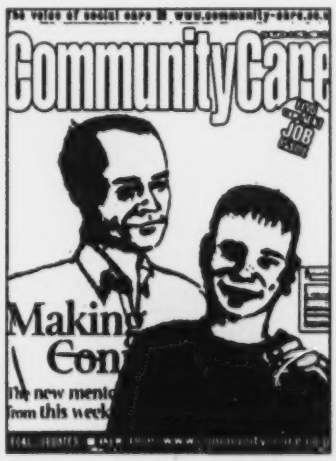
Each game took a full day and was usually hosted by a local company, college or local authority. Outcomes were widely reported in the local press, with awards for the winning teams. The number of entries increased each year.

Trade magazines

Trade magazines are available for just about every vocational area. Many libraries subscribe to them, and some publishers are willing to distribute free copies to schools or colleges if they explain their connection with the industry. Leading media directories, such as BRAD, list all the trade magazines that are available. Copies of BRAD can be obtained from www.brad.co.uk







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Visits

Often, a link with a business can provide the opportunity for students to visit the business. It is vital that this visit is planned with the employer well in advance and that students are able to use the information from the visit in their studies.

Example of a focused visit

Before visiting a local pharmaceutical company, the science teacher arranged to meet the personnel manager. At this meeting the teacher explained the requirements of the unit she was teaching and what students needed to know about various job roles in the company. The personnel manager was able to provide job descriptions for the relevant personnel, which the teacher was able to copy for students. The students were able to prepare questions from these job descriptions and on the day were assigned to a particular employee for whom they had a job description. Following the visit, each group of students gave a presentation on 'their' particular employee and how their job description compared to their actual duties.

Students on this visit effectively followed a before, during and after plan which kept them focused on the task. The employees met with a group of students who were informed and asked relevant questions. The personnel manager was able to attend the presentations given by the students on the differences between job descriptions and job roles.

In planning a visit, remember to consider the following:

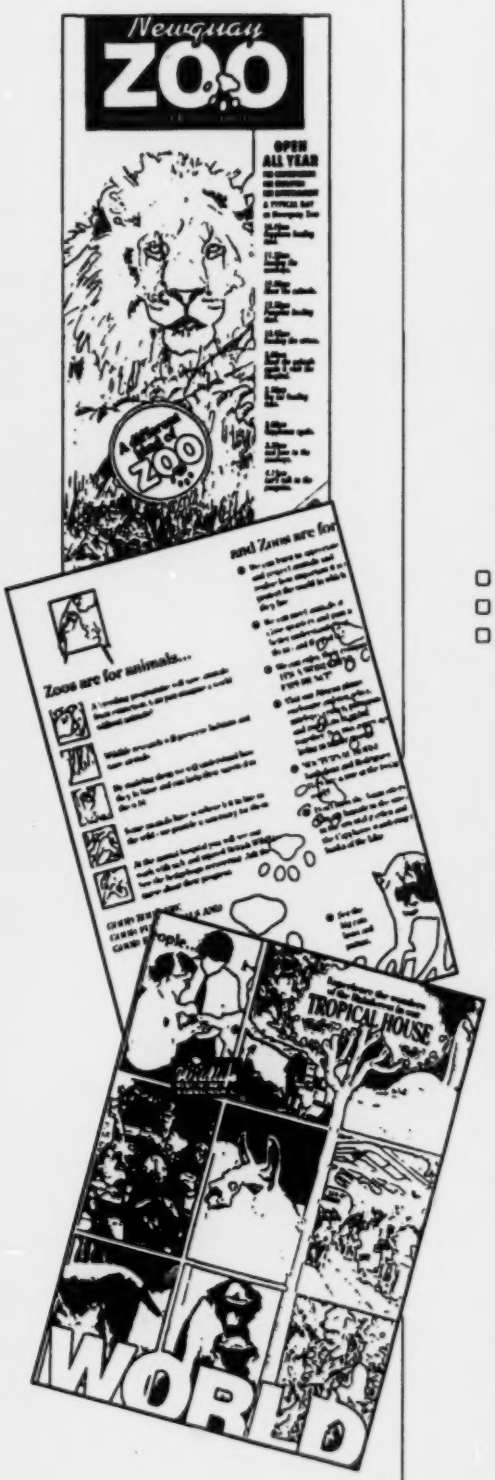
- learning objectives
- viability
- costs and resources
- key skill opportunities
- assessment opportunities.

Prepare students for the visit:

- explain the rationale/context of the visit
- ask students to prepare questions
- ensure students have the appropriate materials to take with them
- hold a briefing session just before the visit
- give students a clear follow-up task.

A visit to Newquay Zoo
(part of Devon EBP project)

After completing a placement at Newquay Zoo, the teacher developed a skills-building activity that involved students visiting the zoo. Students had activities to complete before the visit, which included a discussion about promotional material produced by the zoo. They were also given a resource pack before the visit and had clear instructions about what they were expected to do while at the zoo. Students had a number of tasks to complete after the visit.



Newquay Zoo skills-building activity

How do you think Newquay Zoo would market the services it provides or new services it plans to introduce? Discuss your ideas in small groups, using the headings covered in the preparatory work: advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, direct marketing and sponsorship. One person in each group will summarise the ideas, using an OHP slide or flipchart, and report back to the whole class.

How closely do the ideas suggested relate to the promotional activities actually used by the zoo?

Setting the scene for the visit

Most of the marketing activities are used to promote Newquay Zoo in the town, in the local area and in other parts of Cornwall. You will be visiting the zoo and concentrating on promotional activities on site.

To gain maximum benefit from your visit, before you go you will each be given a resource pack that will include the following:

- ☐ a copy of the zoo's promotional brochure
- ☐ a map of the zoo
- ☐ a series of photographs showing a range of on-site promotions.

You will also have the opportunity to see a video about the zoo.

The visit

On arrival, you will meet the education officer. He will talk to you about: (a) the layout of the zoo and presentation of the animals to the customers and (b) the daily activity programme. You will have plenty of time to walk around the zoo collecting the information you will need for the follow-up work. Do not forget your map, brochure, clipboard and notepaper. A digital camera will be available to provide photographs for the follow-up work.

After the visit – task 1 The zoo has many visits from school groups. Most of the groups are from primary schools (children aged 7–11). The owner of the zoo would like to produce a quiz about the animals at the zoo for visiting primary schools.

Vary the style of questions – begin with some easy questions – cover all parts of the zoo and different groups of animals, and use the map if you wish.

After the visit – task 2 Give a short talk to the rest of the group about customer facilities at the zoo, which provide visitors with an enjoyable experience. Make sure you use at least one image in your talk to illustrate the facilities available clearly.

After the visit – task 3 Produce a brief to explain how Newquay Zoo uses the four main parts of the marketing mix to promote its business (existing and new services) to the target market (actual and potential customers).

Incorporating the vocational context into schemes of work and lesson plans

Although it is important to improve the vocational content of courses, it is vital that ways of doing so are incorporated into a coherent and structured scheme of work. Vocational relevance should illustrate concepts and add value to the knowledge requirements of a course. Teachers need to develop the required understanding and then build upon this knowledge base with the use of appropriate delivery strategies and resources directly related to the vocational area they are delivering.

A scheme of work for health and safety in health and social care (adapted from a Bradford EBP project)

Lesson 1 – Introduction to what is meant by health and safety at work; the idea that all working environments have potential health and safety risks. Students identify risks in a variety of workplaces. Use of Health and Safety Executive (HSE) video, *Whose risk is it anyway?*

Lesson 2 – Introduction to procedures to reduce risks. Students identify procedures and safeguards. Students study an extract outlining the responsibilities of employers and employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Lesson 3 – Health and safety risks within the vocational setting. Students identify potential hazards and risks in a residential home. Students identify how risks could be reduced and make suggestions about practices and procedures.

Lesson 4 – The use of a health and safety audit is explained to students. Students work in pairs to begin to develop an audit tool.

Lesson 5 – Visiting speaker from HSE talks about the work the organisation does in relation to care and residential homes.

Lesson 6 – Students finalise audit.

Lesson 7 – Students complete an audit as part of a visit to a residential home. The tutor has previously visited the home and some 'prepared' risks will be available for students to observe.

A lesson plan for travel and tourism
(adapted from Central Berkshire EBP)

After a teacher placement at a local hotel, a travel and tourism teacher made use of its resource material to devise a lesson. The following lesson plan shows how the material was used and the activities the students undertook to develop their skills and understanding.

Time	Focus	Activity	Resources
15 mins	The way an organisation chooses to project its image can have an enormous effect on its success or otherwise – particularly when targeting specific markets/customers	Consider and discuss the customer types that a city centre hotel would be aiming to attract	Advertisements and other promotional material
10 mins	Among other things, organisations may appear: □ efficient but impersonal (formal) □ modern and up to date □ traditional	Discuss and Q/A: □ company logos □ font types and sizes □ use of punctuation □ style and tone of communication	A range of letter headings Standard/circular letters Brochures
15 mins	The use of standard letters ensures that the company image will be promoted uniformly by all employees throughout the organisation, enabling a common marketing approach to be adopted by the company	Students to examine the layout and content of a standard letter to respond to a request for information on conference and banqueting facilities within a hotel	OHPs 1 and 2
	An organisation will often provide draft formats of letters that fulfil a common purpose. These standard letters may be used to enclose other information, ie leaflets, invoices, brochures, etc	Revise business letter structure	Handout Letter-headed paper could be provided
20 mins	A town centre hotel will shortly be opening its new leisure suite and heated pool. It wishes to attract the following markets: □ business managers who will use the facilities after a stressful day at the office □ active, retired persons who will use the facilities during the weekend	Students to draft opening and closing paragraphs (with headings) that would serve to encourage each type of customer to use the hotel's facilities Remind students to consider their use of style, tone and punctuation to successfully gain new business Students to feedback to tutor and rest of the group for comments	

Total: 60 mins

Developing a vocational resource base

There are a number of national organisations that can help teachers to improve the vocational context of teaching and learning. Many of these organisations are able to provide teaching and learning materials, and some are able to facilitate teacher placements.

National Training Organisations

National Training Organisations (NTOs) are employer-owned, government-recognised organisations whose remit is to improve business performance and competitiveness by developing the knowledge and skills of people in all sectors of industry. NTOs take a national strategic approach to the education and training required for employment. Each NTO is focused on a specific industry sector, such as engineering or construction, or an area of employment such as administration. Many NTOs are currently working with schools and colleges to ensure that young people develop the skills required for work.

An example of an NTO helping to develop education/business links

The Cultural Heritage NTO represents a diverse sector encompassing all cultural heritage organisations, including museums and galleries, ancient monuments and historic buildings, zoos and botanical gardens. CHNTO has been working with schools and colleges that deliver vocational qualifications to promote the cultural heritage sector as a potential place to work. It has also been working with its own member organisations to develop links with schools and colleges, to produce resources, and to offer teacher and student placements. Further information about the CHNTO and its ongoing work with schools and colleges can be found at www.chnto.co.uk/gnvqs

Education Business Partnerships

Each local Learning and Skills Council will have an Education Business Consortium, which because of the amalgamation of some TEC areas may include two or more EBPs. Their remit will be to facilitate communication and activities between business and education. EBPs have in the past provided assistance with curriculum projects, management projects, work experience, teacher placements, production of curriculum resources and a host of other initiatives. Examples of such activities are given throughout this publication. Contact details for EBPs and consortia can be found in the Business in the Community (BITC) directory of education contacts, which is updated annually.

Chambers of Commerce

Chambers of Commerce can be a useful source of information and support. Their members are local business people who meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas and information that relate directly to local trading conditions. Many Chambers of Commerce publish their own newspapers or newsletters and have a directory of members. These will contain up-to-date information about the local business environment. As a first point of contact you need to approach the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. Contact numbers can be found in the telephone directory.

Trading Standards Departments

Trading Standards Departments play a vital role in providing consumer protection within current legislation. They supply information to consumers and businesses, but can also provide this to schools and colleges. You may find that your local Trading Standards Department has produced information sheets specifically for students that cover different aspects of consumer protection legislation. The national Trading Standards Department's website (www.tradingstandards.gov.uk) has a search facility to locate your local Trading Standards Department.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

The HSE has a mission to ensure that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled. It produces a wide range of support materials for employers and employees to make sure that the workplace is as safe as possible. The HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk) contains a list of all its resources.

Learning and Skills Development Agency (Vocational Learning Support Programme)

The Vocational Learning Support Programme (previously known as the GNVQ Support Programme) is funded by the DfEE to support teachers in the teaching and delivery of vocational courses. Its work includes subject-specific workshops, development projects, in-house training and publications.

Working with NTOs and employers, the programme has produced a series of *Industry information packs*. These packs contain authentic sector documents, such as policies, training materials and procedures, as well as resource lists and useful website addresses. Many teachers have used the documents to develop activities and assignments. The packs are available in 12 vocational areas. Further information on *Industry information packs* can be found on the Agency's website (www.LSagency.org.uk) and copies can be obtained by telephoning the Vocational Learning Support Programme Helpline: 020 7962 1066.

Further work with NTOs will ensure that teachers and lecturers receive the support they need to enhance the vocational nature of qualifications. The Vocational Learning Support Programme plans to:

- produce resource packs for specific units/themes
- organise teacher events held on employers' premises
- develop handbooks and guidelines for teachers and students on progression routes
- run regional fairs to promote vocational employment opportunities in the local area.

Business/organisation resource packs

The London Transport Museum has produced a range of resource packs specifically designed to support curriculum-based work in both the museum and in the classroom. The GNVQ resource pack contains information, resources and activity sheets to support GNVQ Leisure and Tourism, Engineering and Art and Design at all levels. For further information and to order the packs (£4.99 each), telephone the museum education officer on 020 7565 7290 or e-mail education@ltmuseum.co.uk

Directories and sources of further information

The **Centre for Education and Industry at the University of Warwick** produces a directory that lists all business organisations able to provide useful teaching materials for vocational programmes. Such resource lists are valuable, as many give a brief outline of the possible use of the material. Website: www.warwick.ac.uk/cei

Business in the Community (BITC) is a unique consortium of companies committed to improving their positive impact on society. The BITC, working with the national EBP network and the DfEE, has produced a directory of education contacts. The directory lists government bodies, non-profit organisations and charities that support education/business links. Telephone: 020 7224 1660. Website: www.bitc.org.uk

Teacher placements

Teachers who engage in placements often see them as a significant part of their professional development. In terms of extrinsic benefits, there are a wide variety of opportunities to enhance the skills profile of the teacher. Industrial placements should:

- improve confidence in teaching the vocational area
- expand the range of teaching and learning materials available
- give teachers an opportunity for informal or formal accreditation of the placement
- identify opportunities for further professional development.

Teacher placements provide practitioners with a realistic picture of the vocational areas they are teaching. They cater for a variety of practitioners, including:

- newly qualified teachers who are new to vocational qualifications and the vocational area
- experienced teachers who have been asked to contribute to the teaching of vocational programmes
- teachers who have prior industrial experience in the area but need to update their knowledge to take account of the changing pace of the sector
- technical support staff from vocational areas who wish to update their knowledge of the sector.

Flexible patterns of delivery for placements

Despite strong support for teacher placement from managers, many schools and colleges have reported problems with finding time to release staff to undertake them, for example finding and paying for cover. These problems are often associated with the more traditional pattern of teacher placement, which involves teachers spending one or two weeks with a particular employer. While there is a great deal to commend this form of placement, there are manageability, resource and education-based arguments for looking at other forms of delivery.

In 1999/2000, the then GNVQ Support Programme ran a number of placements in conjunction with EBPs and NTOs. Many of the placements had to deal with the problems of releasing teachers in schools and colleges for one or two weeks at a time and sought alternative delivery methods. These are outlined below, with strengths and weaknesses as indicated by participants.

Placement takes place over a set time period (eg one day per week for six weeks)

Strengths:

- often easier to arrange cover and students are less disadvantaged
- more likely to identify with and 'see through' a particular project
- can develop an ongoing relationship between the organisation, the teacher and the school/college
- the impact of the placement can be continuously fed back to students as 'live' projects with regular updates.

Weaknesses:

- takes a lot of organisation and planning with multiple objectives
- more difficult to build professional relationships
- could be complicated by changes in personnel within the organisation.

One-day placements

Strengths:

- can provide a very useful 'taster' session if the placement is well organised
- can help to inform decisions about future placements
- teachers are more likely to have concise learning objectives
- practitioners may have set aside specific time to support the placement
- works well with work-shadowing.

Weaknesses:

- can only provide a 'snap-shot' of the activities of the organisation
- relies on a very tight schedule
- takes a lot of organisation for a limited outcome.

Eastleigh Action for Skills Project

This project involved placements with, among others, the fire service, a major brewery and the retail sector. In an evaluation of a placement with Marks and Spencer, one teacher commented that:

The four-day placement imposed extra pressures on an already busy schedule. In view of this and information overload, there would be several advantages to a series of half-day placements.

These advantages included:

- less pressure on teaching and preparation time
- an opportunity to reflect and review
- more opportunity to ask follow-up questions
- an opportunity to change focus if necessary.

Placement sharing

Another delivery method might include teachers 'placement sharing'. This has the advantage of allowing teams to reflect on their experiences. However, this type of placement activity tends to require a great deal of coordination.

The key message here is that there is a great deal to gain from both traditional patterns of teacher placement as well as more flexible arrangements. The over-riding principle should be that it is essential for teachers of vocational education to be practically engaged with the sectors they are teaching. This engagement will be facilitated through a variety of methods and teacher placements are not exclusive in serving this purpose. Indeed, teacher placements in isolation can often lead to a misleading view of the sector.

Teacher placements should be seen as part of a package of measures aimed at enhancing the teacher's knowledge of the vocational area. Others measures may include:

- visits from speakers in industry
- updates and discussions with part-time staff who may have current vocational experience
- visits to student work experience placements
- contact with NTOs
- local employers, who may be school or college governors
- students' experiences of part-time work.

Devon Education Business Partnership

Three 11–18 schools and three 11–16 schools were involved in the project and teachers undertook placements in a variety of areas. Most placements took place over one day because of difficulties in releasing staff from teaching duties, but where block placements took place, a 1-3-1 model was followed. This gave staff one day for preparation (normally on employer's premises), three days on placement and a final reporting day where learning outcomes could be identified. The final reporting day 'enabled teachers to share experiences, energise participants and provide quality time for reflection'.

Learning points identified for teachers included:

- updating understanding of business practices
- identifying staff roles and responsibilities
- appreciating the competitive environment in which many organisations operated
- better understanding of employer needs – skills, personal qualities and experience
- better appreciation of quality assurance systems
- appreciation of the growing importance of information and communications technology (ICT) and its application in a range of businesses (eg in graphic design)
- better understanding of terminology and up-to-date technological terms.

Placement outcomes for teachers included:

- laying foundations for local partnership development
- a greater awareness of progression opportunities for students within vocational sectors
- more student opportunities for work placements
- a resolution to integrate the use of ICT into courses more extensively
- extra resources for teaching and learning
- representatives from industry invited into school.

This case study illustrates the value of a 'joined-up' approach to teacher placements. By coordinating the programme, teachers have been able to develop a framework that addresses specific curriculum issues, as opposed to placements being seen as an individualised development activity for teachers.

Outcomes were shared and resources generated collectively. It is interesting to note the wide variety of outcomes that were generated for teachers. The more obvious ones included access to resources and industry-specific information. However, the project also demonstrated the very positive 'knock-on' effects of placements, including the development of stronger links between the schools and industry.

Benefits of teacher placements for students

Students should benefit directly by having teachers who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about current developments within their vocational area. They should have access to a wider range of resource materials that bring to life the vocational area they are studying.

Devon EBP project

Staff involved in this project identified the following benefits for students:

- better quality resources and materials
- key skills were more clearly addressed and students had a better understanding of the 'employability' benefits of key skills
- better advice on employment opportunities within their vocational area – particularly for media students
- clearer and more up-to-date technical information
- realistic 'flow-chart' account of processes within organisations.

Other comments from teachers

Whitbread plc placement

I was given access to all but the most confidential information and was able to discuss a wide range of topics about the business with the staff who actually do the jobs – and see them in action.

The whole experience has provided me with plenty of up-to-date, relevant and useful information that I will be able to use back in the classroom.

Water industry placement

I learned about new techniques for analysing the purity of water samples and gained a better understanding of how science and business can work together, providing a good service for the community.

Greenwich EBP project

In this project, the EBP designed a project diary to enable teachers to set themselves objectives for each day of the placement. Teachers were also encouraged to record the key learning outcomes they had achieved. The extract below is taken from the log of a teacher on a placement with Social Services. The number of learning outcomes from a single day is notable and this reflects the amount of planning that went into the project.

Health and social care placement with Social Services

Day 2

Objectives for the day (complete in advance)

- insight into how the care manager functions
- administration of Social Services
- different job roles.

Staff contacts during the day

- access coordinator
- access worker
- care manager
- sat in on multi-agency meeting at local hospital.

Key events of the day

- one-to-one discussion with access coordinator
- sitting with access officers taking calls and screening.

Materials collected

- a variety of booklets/leaflets produced by Social Services to help all clients, eg community care, respite and services available.

Relevance to learning programme

- Unit 1 – Statutory sector organisations
- Unit 2 – Factors affecting health and well-being
- Unit 3 – Social and economic factors
- Unit 4 – Accessing care needs.

Comments on the value of the day (including information on skills requirements and insights into industry)

- An excellent placement. I gained valuable information on the 'access' process for adults and the elderly. I was able to sit down with an access officer receiving calls from the public and observed the process used for accessing support from Social Services.
- I sat in on a meeting at the hospital where care managers presented cases for elderly clients needing care at residential/nursing homes. Most enlightening!

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Developing effective student placement programmes

Post-16 work experience

Work experience is now a normal expectation for full-time students in schools and colleges. In general, the pre-16 school-based process is well established and relatively straightforward to provide, with ample support given through the careers services, EBPs or other organisations employed to provide a management or monitoring service for schools.

Post-16 work experience is less structured. Most full-time FE students will find a period of work experience embedded in their programme, but the actual needs of those students vary. Some students will be studying for general qualifications such as A- or AS-levels, where the aim is to provide a 'broad preparation for occupational selection'. Other students will be committed to achieving specific vocational outcomes through other qualifications, such as vocational A-levels.

Work experience management

The management of post-16 work experience can be complicated by the wider age range of students, widely different student needs and levels of motivation and the sheer size and management structure of the organisation. Nonetheless, key points of good practice can be highlighted:

- A clear college policy can define the systems and processes of the organisation.
- Clear briefings should be provided for students who have an entitlement to work experience.
- Placement providers should receive clear operational guidelines on their rights and responsibilities, as well as the level of support to be provided by the school or college.
- Associated paperwork should be easy to understand and to use.
- Ideally, work-experience planning should be coordinated on a cross-college basis.
- Easily accessible internal contact points should be established at an early stage for placement providers, to allow easy and rapid contact.
- Good support systems should exist for both student and placement provider while work placements are in progress.
- Links with other placement organisations will help to reduce competition and minimise confusion for providers.
- Close links also need to be maintained with the local careers services offices.
- It is important that effective quality monitoring processes are embedded in the whole process and that systems are regularly reviewed.

The role of small and medium-sized enterprises in providing placements

Over 70% of work experience opportunities are offered by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) rather than large companies. This provides both advantages and disadvantages, but educational organisations have faced particular problems in giving SMEs the support they need to provide students with a quality learning and training experience. Small companies freely take on a substantial responsibility for non-employees who are likely to put some strain on their systems. They must balance the ideal of ensuring that the student is a supernumerary within their small team against the need to give a valuable experience which motivates and tests the young person.

The role of the placement provider is a hard one and it is often undertaken at some cost to the company. Other pressures face SMEs:

- they often have to contend with competing requests for placements from different organisations that may be unaware of the others' requests and probably operate differently
- they may provide placements to several of these organisations
- they are tasked with reviewing their health and safety and insurance needs
- there is often no training manager or 'specialist' to deal with the placement, although good supervision must be provided
- they must be prepared to allow regular access to visitors from external bodies
- they must face an inevitable element of bureaucracy
- the smaller the enterprise, the more limited the scope of the placement may be.

SMEs are often very busy, with little spare capacity or time for intensive tuition. Added to this is the uncertainty they face about the abilities of the student they receive, despite any initial interview processes. Nonetheless, year after year, SMEs continue to support the large-scale national work experience system. This reflects their ongoing commitment to training young people who potentially form their workforce, and the SME view that they need to contribute to work-related training in the community.

Finally, recognition should be given to the special contribution made by many small firms that regularly provide placements for disaffected young people or students, and trainees with learning or physical disabilities.

Portfolios and part-time working

Best practice would suggest that greatest success occurs when:

- the value of and need for work experience are clearly highlighted in the curriculum
- work experience is integrated into classwork with adequate preparation, subsequent feedback and analysis by students
- there is use of this insight into the world of work to underline the theoretical training or education being provided.

Many young people are required to collect evidence of their achievements as part of their programmes. Work experience is clearly a part of this. However, it is also evident that increasing numbers of young people are involved in part-time employment once they have reached the age of 16. It is arguable that schools and colleges have not adequately explored the achievements gained through this 'real' work experience, which could serve as a further source of curriculum enrichment.

Outside the educational context, students are developing the more general skills of working alongside more specific job skills. Work skills and job tasks are further supplemented by the development of key skills. This is likely to occur in the use of number or IT, the betterment of communication through the world of work, or as a result of working with others, and being given or taking responsibility and addressing problems which inevitably face young workers in the real world. It has, after all, long been recognised that the curriculum vitae of a young person should contain all types of previous work as a demonstration of potential employability. The value of this part-time work towards building a portfolio, whether for GNVQ, key skills or general records of achievement, should not be ignored.

Participation in part-time employment is often a sensitive issue for some post-16 students, seeming to suggest a lack of complete commitment to their studies. Research from a range of sources suggests that the involvement of students in part-time employment is often on a more significant scale than it has been in the past, with students working on average 14–17 hours a week. The data also show that for at least some students a part-time job is essential if they are to continue in further education. Family circumstances can mean that students have to support not only themselves but also, in some cases, contribute to the upkeep of other family members. Research also suggests that there can be both positive and negative aspects of combining study and employment, not least because there may be opportunities for the student to develop a greater understanding of the work environment, which may in turn improve their success with their academic studies.

Schools and colleges need to have a clear policy on part-time employment, which recognises that many students will want to, and indeed may need to maintain paid employment. During induction sessions, post-16 students can be asked if they want to discuss the extent of their existing or planned part-time employment. Whilst recognising that students may wish to keep the information confidential, clear statements should be made as to the institution's policy and the expectations of students in terms of commitment to their studies. This open discussion of the issue should mean that students are more likely to consider the potential for their experiences of work to fit with their academic courses and be more willing to discuss their plans or concerns with their personal and academic tutors. An ongoing programme of guidance and support is required if students are not to find themselves pressured by balancing the demands of their employment and their academic commitments.

General employer benefits

To summarise, employers can provide a number of benefits or services to schools or colleges to help them make their courses more work-related.

Curriculum advice – where employers will offer practical support or advice on the delivery of courses, their content and the latest industrial or commercial advances, often through joining a subject or departmental advisory group.

Curriculum materials – these are sometimes sponsored or produced by a company or consortium of industrial organisations, with the aim of advising or attracting potential entrants to industry.

Mentoring – an adult with industrial or commercial experience gives one-to-one support to a student or trainee who is looking to enter the employment market.

Mock interviews – simulated interviews conducted by people who interview candidates as part of their actual job roles.

Talks or lectures – an employer may visit the classroom and provide a 'reality check' on vocational theory and student perceptions.

Work-based projects – where one or more students may undertake a problem-solving or analytical task on the company's premises.

Work experience – a full engagement in the workplace, which has become a staple element of work-related education.

Work shadowing – allows students to observe the working environment, undertake tasks and talk to staff.

Workplace visits – structured visits to companies can help understanding, but require a deal of planning on the part of the firm involved.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Introduction to the Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick

The Centre for Education and Industry (CEI) at the University of Warwick was established in 1987 to serve as a centre for research, teaching and training and disseminating of information and experience in education/business collaboration. The three main strands of CEI activity are concerned with:

- vocational education and training
- work-related learning
- the role of education in economic development.

Within these areas CEI can help partners to:

- monitor and evaluate the performance and quality of partnership programmes
- establish clear and realistic policies for working with education or business
- review existing programmes in the context of changing educational policy.

The CEI has developed an Excellence in Work-Related Learning Award, which allows providers to review the quality of their provision in schools and colleges. It was also commissioned by the Department of Trade and Industry to undertake the development of the *Enterprise guide* (www.dti.gov.uk/enterpriseguide). A web-based resource, the guide advises teachers on delivering enterprise education and entrepreneurial skills through subjects at Key stages 3 and 4.

The CEI has considerable expertise in the research and development of work-related learning within the context of social inclusion and increasing rates of participation. It is currently working with partners from Hungary, Spain and Israel on a major EU-funded research project, exploring the contribution that enterprise education can make in working with young people at risk of exclusion.

CEI publications

Managing the dairy business – a resource pack for use with vocational A-level Business.

Developing key skills through AS/A-level programmes – practical ideas and activities to support the development of key skills with post-16 students.

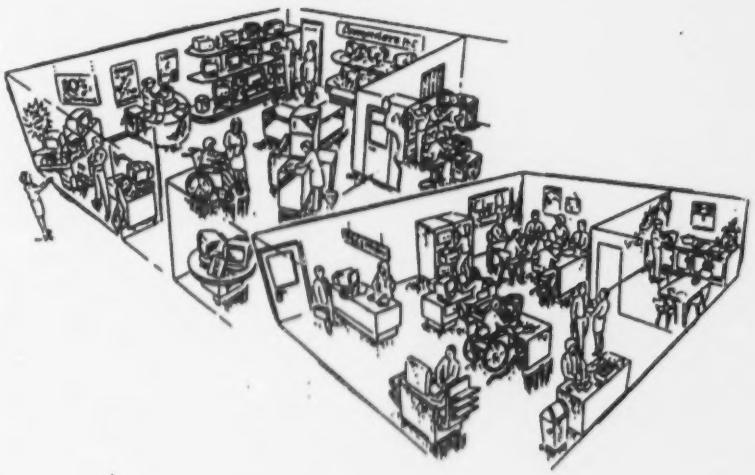
Go for it - a work placement resource pack aimed at promoting equal opportunities and challenging stereotypes.

Work experience learning frameworks (pre and post-16) – frameworks that cover a wide range of occupational areas and allow employers, students, teachers and lecturers to plan and prepare for effective work placements.

For more information on the CEI's work, write to:
Centre for Education and Industry,
University of Warwick,
Coventry CV4 7AL
Tel 024 7652 3909
e-mail: cei@warwick.ac.uk
www.warwick.ac.uk/cei

Work Experience

LEARNING FRAMEWORKS



TUTOR MANUAL

cei centre for education & industry

D/EE

Introduction and background

The *Work Experience Learning Frameworks* have been developed by the Centre for Education and Industry (CEI), at the University of Warwick, for use with students aged 14-19. The project has been supported by the Department for Education and Employment, and individual *Frameworks* have been developed with the involvement of industrial sponsors.

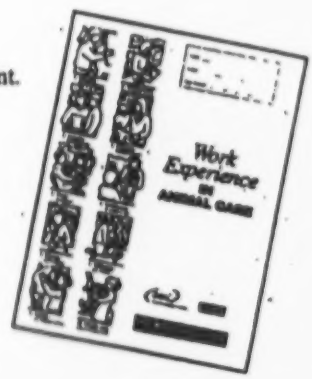
Organisers of work experience aim constantly to improve the quality of work experience and in particular to ensure specific learning outcomes for students. However, organisers, teachers and students are often unsure of the opportunities for learning likely to be available at different placements and in different sectors. In addition, students, especially pre-16, are not always aware of the potential for the development of Key Skills during work experience placements.

The *Learning Frameworks* have been developed, following research into placements in a wide variety of industrial and commercial sectors, to identify the potential for student learning. This learning is based on work tasks that students could be offered in different sectors, leading to work skills and Key Skills. The Frameworks provide students with the range of tasks that they could undertake on their placement and the skills that they could acquire.

Most of the *Frameworks* are available in both pre-16 and post-16 versions, with the pre-16 version providing, in addition, research questions that students might answer during their placement, and the post-16 version including assignments which could be completed following the placement. The number of *Frameworks* available continues to increase. See Appendix for a current list of available *Frameworks* and sponsors.

The *Frameworks* have been produced in A3 format with illustrations to make them more attractive and user-friendly. All have the same structure, which is as follows:

Front page: This shows several different ways in which students can learn from their placement. It has space for students to write in their names and the name of the placement. Additional logos can be added locally.



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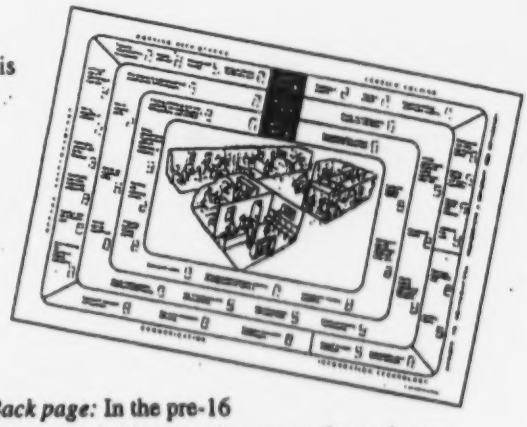
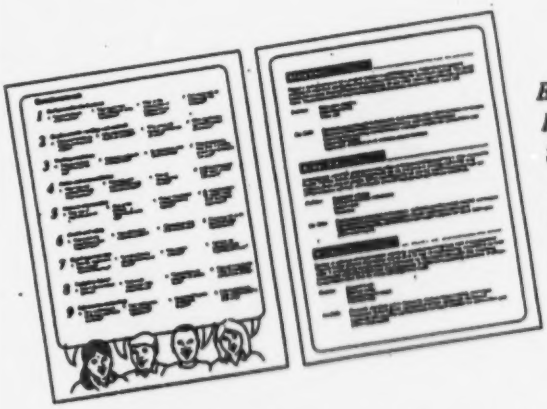
Inside spread: At the centre of the *Framework* is an illustration which shows a typical work experience placement in the vocational area. This aims to help teachers and students to visualise the learning opportunities. There are three concentric circles around the illustration showing work tasks, work skills and Key Skills.





Back page: In the pre-16 *Framework* this comprises a set of questions. Students may wish to investigate some of these questions during their placement, although they may not wish to use all of the questions. In the post-16 version, the sample assignments are written to correspond to Intermediate and Advanced level.

An evaluation of the use of the *Frameworks* across the country has shown that they:

- are simple and easy to use;
- encourage students to set individual learning objectives and outcomes that are strongly focused on tasks and skills;
- act as a prompt to the employer in arranging a varied and meaningful work experience programme that meets the student's needs;
- provide a clear and concise summary of the student's achievements that can be readily referred to when writing coursework or a summary for the Record of Achievement;
- are useful in monitoring and discussing a student's progress;
- are useful in the preparation and debriefing of students;
- increase awareness of Key Skills.

The *Work Experience Learning Frameworks* have been disseminated since 1997 to contract holders for work experience rganisation. They are photocopiable for schools and colleges. The complete set of *Learning Frameworks* is available on the enclosed CD-ROM, which also includes a copy of the contents of this Tutor Manual. A blank version of the *Framework* and an editable version are also on the CD-ROM. These have been provided in response to requests from users who want to encourage students to tailor their own *Frameworks*, either for unusual placements, or as an IT exercise which, itself, provides additional learning.

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Activity 3 Employability Skills

Aims

- To raise students' awareness of employability skills following their work placement
- To encourage students to consider how they can acquire the skills employers' want

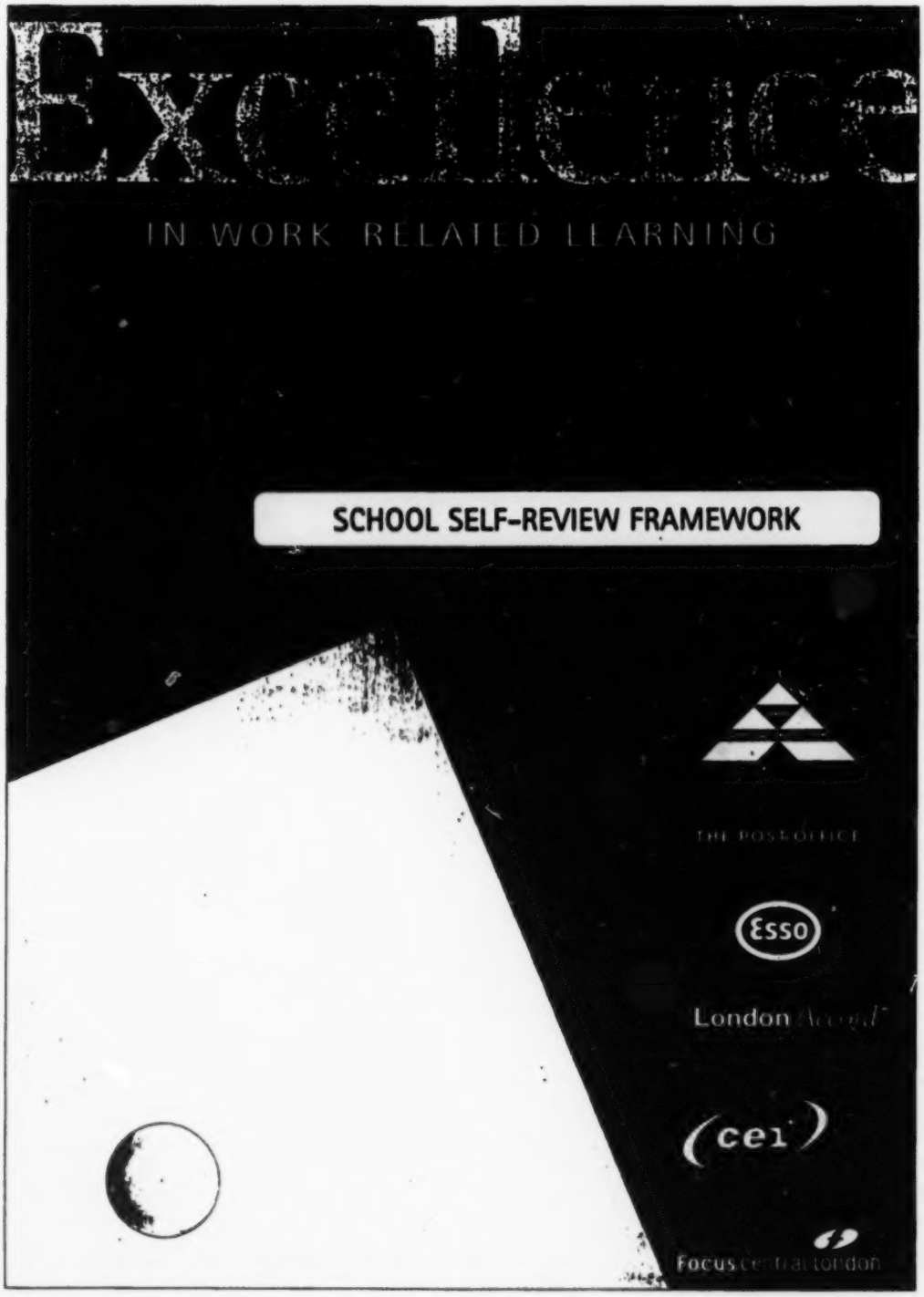
Method

- Divide students into groups of four/five. Ensure that each group includes students who have experienced different work environments (e.g. retail, office, and factory).
- Give one person in each group a set of the *Employability Skills* cards. That person should then look at the first card and read it out to the group and say: (a) what they think the skill involves and (b) whether it is important to the employer at their work placement.
- The card is placed on the bottom of the pile and the set of cards passed to the next person who takes a new card. The task is repeated until all of the cards have been looked at.
- Next, ask each group to choose any three of the employability skills and discuss how they could improve their ability in each of them. What opportunities are there for them to develop the skill both in and outside school/college? How do their school/college courses help them to develop employability skills? What evidence do they have of these skills?

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS CARDS

Showing initiative	Negotiating your work programme	Understanding the importance of good appearance
Preparing well for interviews	Asking questions when appropriate	Understanding the importance of good time keeping
Being flexible and willing	Presenting yourself well to the employer	Showing that you are honest and hard-working
Working well in a team	Working on your own	Getting on well with different types of people
Showing that you are confident and determined	Showing an interest in what you are doing	Having a 'can do' attitude to work

Appendix 4: Framework for excellence in work-related learning



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How does the scoring system work?

The maximum score on the framework is 100. The criteria are grouped into order of difficulty. The essential building blocks appear at the top and the more advanced practice appears towards the foot of each table. The majority of criteria score 1 point, but some of the most important items score 2 points. Overall there are 60 points for enablers and 40 points for outcomes.

For each element, and for the framework as a whole, there are three levels of practice. These reflect national benchmarks of where schools are in the management and development of their work-related learning programmes. The three levels are:

- **Foundation level** - the basic features of a sound programme are in place
- **Developing level** - the basic features and a number of good practice features are in place
- **Best practice level** - the leading edge of practice in the management and delivery of work-related learning programmes.

Through implementing their action plans schools can continually improve their practice and in that way move between levels.

Who should complete the framework?

The framework can be used in the following ways by the school:

- The Work-Related Learning Co-ordinator or designated link person can complete the framework in pencil, in discussion with a senior manager
- The instrument can be copied and distributed to a group of relevant staff who would complete the instrument independently. The group would then come together to discuss and agree on a consensus set of ratings.

It is recommended that the school works with an adviser from the local Education Business Partnership (EBP) or local authority to finalise the initial score and to action plan. This is because it is helpful to have an outsider to challenge ratings and to ask for examples to show that the evidence is either already available or relatively easily attainable. The EBP may also be able to advise and support the school on the development of its action plan.

What are the main steps in completing the framework?

1 Read each element in turn, beginning with Leadership and Management.

2 For each quality criterion indicate with a circle around the number in the S (Score) column whether you believe that the school meets the criterion. Read the guidance notes for further information and to see if you are likely to meet the evidence requirement.

3 When you have identified those criteria which you can justifiably claim and support with evidence sum the total of points achieved. Write this in at the foot of each table.

4 Check to see at what level your school has reached on the element. The three levels are: Foundation, Developing and Best Practice.

5 Decide on which criteria you can address through an action plan. Write in the action plan column what action you intend to take to improve your programme.

6 Complete the summary sheet to show your profile over the nine elements and your total out of the maximum score of 100 points. Use this sheet to indicate the areas for action, i.e. those criteria where you do not currently score but which you want to develop.

7 The summary sheet should be photocopied and sent to:

Excellence in Work-Related Learning Award National Pilot
133 Lower Mortlake Road,
Richmond, Surrey TW9 2LP

or faxed to 0208 255 6937.

This will aid the University of Warwick in its benchmarking research. Individual schools will not be identified in any summary tables that are produced. Copies of the data will be provided to participating schools.

8 If you are eligible and want to have your school assessed for the Excellence in Work-Related Learning Award, then you will need to prepare a portfolio of evidence and have an assessment visit. The evidence required is set out in the guidance notes and in the Handbook to accompany the award. Various pro-formas are available to help you collect evidence.

9 When you have completed your action plan, you can repeat your review and rescore by circling the numbers in the RS (Revised Score) column. These will be reviewed by your assessor who will use the final AS (Assessor's Score column).

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USING THE FRAMEWORK

What is the framework?

The framework has been designed as a self-review and action planning process for schools. It can be used as a tool in the management of change. Schools can assess:

- where they are now in the management and organisation of work-related learning
- where they stand against a benchmark of national quality standards
- where they want to reach during the next year through following an action plan.

How is work-related learning defined?

The framework covers those aspects of the secondary school curriculum that have become known as the work-related curriculum, work-related learning or preparation for working life. However, the most important thing is not the label on the bottle, but rather the list of ingredients, that we take to be as follows:

1 General business and community link activities/work-related activities, e.g. mentoring, teacher placements

2 Business and community links activities that benefit the school's staff and local business or community organisations

3 Business and community link activities in a specific subject context, either vocational or academic

4 Work experience

5 Work-related elements of careers education

6 Economic awareness, economic and industrial understanding, business understanding

7 Business enterprise and community enterprise projects

8 Work-related aspects of PSHCE

9 Work-related learning programmes that have been devised for pupils disapplied from the National Curriculum

10 An entitlement for all pupils to have certain experiences of work.

In the framework the phrase 'work-related learning programme(s)' or 'WRL programmes' refers, in a generic sense, to all of the above.

How is the framework organised?

The framework is organised into nine elements. Five of these are '**enablers**', i.e. things which contribute to the achievement of the aims of the WRL programmes:

- Leadership and Management
- Policy and Strategy
- People Management
- Resources
- Processes

The other four elements are '**outcomes**':

- Pupil & Staff Satisfaction
- Stakeholder Satisfaction
- Impact on Society
- Outcomes.

Each element has a two-page spread. On the left-hand side of the page are the quality criteria, scoring and action plan columns. On the right-hand side are guidance notes. These give further information about each quality criterion. The notes also state the evidence requirements that need to be met in order for schools to claim that each criterion has been achieved for the purposes of the Excellence Award in Work-Related Learning.

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There is much evidence to suggest that linking the curriculum to the working world increases student motivation and leads to improvements in achievement. Find out how to make your programmes more vocational by considering the merits of teacher placement, work experience for students and creating industry links.

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